



NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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MAFMC and ASMFC to Hold Public Hearings for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) are seeking public comment on the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. Comments may be submitted at any of five virtual public hearings to be held between **February 17 and March 2, 2021** or via written comment until **March 16, 2021**.

The Council and Commission are developing this joint amendment to consider adjusting the allocations of catch or landings between the commercial and recreational fisheries for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. The commercial and recreational allocations for all three species are currently based on historical proportions of landings (for summer flounder and black sea bass) or catch (for scup) from each sector. Recent changes in how recreational catch is estimated have resulted in a discrepancy between the current levels of estimated recreational harvest and the allocations of summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass to the recreational sector. Some changes have also been made to commercial catch data since the allocations were established. This amendment considers whether modifications to the allocations are needed in light of these and other changes in the fisheries. The amendment also considers options that would allow a portion of the allowable landings to be transferred between the commercial and recreational sectors each year, in either direction, based on the needs of each sector.

We encourage you to visit the Council's [Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment](#) web page or the Commission's [Public Input](#) web page, where you can read the Public Hearing Document, the Draft Amendment, and watch the public hearing presentation (to be posted by Friday, February 12, 2021). The Council's Public Hearing Document is an abbreviated version of the amendment which summarizes proposed management options and impacts. The Commission's Draft Amendment is a more comprehensive management document that will resemble the Commission's final amendment once approved. Both documents contain identical options for public input, but each have been developed according to each management body's differing requirements.

Written Comments

Written comments may be submitted through **March 16, 2021** by any of the following methods:

- 1. ONLINE:** <http://www.mafmc.org/comments/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>
- 2. EMAIL:** kdancy@mafmc.org
- 3. MAIL or FAX:** Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
FAX: 302.674.5399

Given summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass's presence in, and movement between, state waters (0-3 miles from shore) and federal waters (3-200 miles from shore), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council jointly manage these species.

Please include “Fluke/Scup/Sea Bass Allocation Amendment” in the subject line if using email or fax, or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments. All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission. **Please do not send separate comments to the Council and Commission.**

Virtual Hearing Schedule

You are encouraged to attend any of the following five virtual public hearings and to provide oral or written comments at these hearings. While we encourage you to attend the hearing that is targeted toward your regional groupings of states or an individual state, anyone is welcome to participate in any hearing.

| Date | Regional Grouping | Contact(s) |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday, February 17 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Massachusetts and Rhode Island | Nichola Meserve (MA), 617-626-1531 Jason McNamee (RI), 401-222-4700 |
| Thursday, February 18 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | New Jersey | Joseph Cimino (NJ), 609-748-2063 |
| Wednesday, February 24 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Delaware and Maryland | John Clark (DE), 302-739-9914 Sonny Gwinn (MD), 410-208-1149 Scott Lenox (MD), 410-430-1016 |
| Monday, March 1 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Virginia and North Carolina | Ellen Bolen (VA), 757-247-2269 Chris Batsavage (NC), 252-241-2995 |
| Tuesday, March 2 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Connecticut and New York | Justin Davis (CT), 860-434-6043 Maureen Davidson (NY), 631-444-0483 |

[Webinar Connection Instructions](#)

To register for a public hearing please click here: [Public Hearing Registration](#) and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu. Hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, which can be accessed using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. When connecting to audio, we strongly encourage participants to use computer voice over internet (VoIP) so you can ask questions and provide input. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 1-877-309-2074 and enter access code 128-060-916. Those joining by phone only will be limited to listening to the presentation and will not be able to provide input. For technical assistance setting up and logging into GoToWebinar, contact Savannah Lewis at 703-842-0715.

If you are connected only by phone in listen only mode, you will not show up as a webinar attendee. In the event that there are no webinar attendees, the public hearing will be cancelled unless state staff request that the hearing content is presented.

Tips for Providing Public Comment

We value your input. To be most effective, we request that your comment include specific details as to why you support or oppose a particular alternative. Specifically, please address the following:

- Which proposed alternative(s) do you support, and which do you oppose?
- Why do you support or oppose the alternative(s)?
- Is there any additional information you think should be considered?

Contacts

For additional information and updates, please visit: <https://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>. If you have any questions, please contact either:

Kiley Dancy, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, kdancy@mafmc.org, 302-526-5257

Dustin Colson Leaning, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, dleaning@asmfc.org, 703-842-0714